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The Honest Doubter

BY ANDREW GILLIES

Unless I see his hands with the mark of the nails, and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe it. John 20:25.

IN the history of the Christian religion, the apostle Thomas has attained a melancholy distinction. Wherever the Bible is read and wherever the gospel is preached, he has become known as the Doubter. Indeed, his very name has been made the synonym of all forms of incredulity and skepticism. "Doubting Thomas" is an epithet, expressive of varying shades of emotion, which has been applied to all sorts of unbelievers.

At first thought, all that has seemed to be deserved. For Thomas was a doubter. He was the real, simon-pure doubter of the apostolic group. When word was brought to him of the resurrection of Jesus, he flatly refused to believe it. He insisted upon tangible and indubitable evidence before he would even think of believing. Indeed, he demanded tactual evidence, actual contact with the body of the risen Lord, before accepting the fact that Jesus had kept his word. "Unless I see his hands with the mark of the nails," he said, "and unless I put my finger where the nails were, and put my hands into his side, I refuse to believe it."

Now, at first thought, all that makes for his unqualified condemnation. Here was a man who had lived with Jesus for the better part of three years, a man who had listened to the words of him who "spake as never man spake," who had witnessed Jesus' deeds of healing and mercy, who had felt the irresistible impact of his presence. Here was a man who had heard and seen what would have convinced the vast majority of mankind, or would at least have predisposed them toward acceptance of Christ's claims. Here he was standing out against everything except tactual evidence, proof that would satisfy the most obdurate, proof that would meet the demands of all his senses.

I say that at first he seems to deserve our utter condemnation, all the epithets which have been hurled at

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him, the pity of the devout. And yet I wonder if the time has not come for a complete revision of our estimate, for a more just and equitable appraisal of Thomas and his doubt.

JESUS DID NOT RESENT THOMAS' DOUBT

Has it ever occured to you that, according to the records, Jesus did not for a moment resent Thomas' attitude? He did not offer the slightest criticism upon that disciple's demands. Indeed, by all that he did and said, he put his seal of approval upon them. As one writer has put it, Jesus' second appearance to the little group of apostles was in all probability for the express purpose of coming into contact with doubting Thomas. It was primarily to meet that stubborn skeptic and convince him of that which he had refused to accept.

Can any open-minded man read the account of the risen Lord's meeting with Thomas without being moved to the depths?

That stubborn doubter was not with the others when Jesus first appeared to them. But a week later he was with them. And Jesus appeared and said, "Peace be unto you." And then he turned to Thomas and said: "Reach hither your finger and touch my hands. Reach hither your hand and put it into my side. And be not faithless, but believing." And Thomas answered and said, "My Lord and my God." And the Master said, "Because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are they that have *not* seen, and yet have believed."

Has it occurred to you, also, that Thomas was modern and scientific? He was a genuine forerunner of this age of absolute insistence upon adequate evidence of the truth of every teaching, of the validity of every claim, of the soundness of every religious belief.

THE PASSING OF CREDULITY

The day of unquestioning credulity has gone, and thank God it has. In its place has come the sounder, wiser, better day of criticism, investigation, of the acid testing of everything in the heavens above, the earth beneath, and the waters under the earth. Moreover, that criticism has been made thorough and drastic. It is applied today not merely to the details of religion and life, but to religion and life in their essence, their totality.

James Gordon Gilkey writes: "The young people [of our day] no longer ask questions about this or that miracle story in the Bible or this or that single doctrine in the orthodox Christian system. Rather they enquire with bewildering frankness whether an intelligent man can conclude that there is any meaning in life; whether the familiar belief in God is anything more than a pitiful defense mechanism, devised by human beings who dare not face the fact of their own insignificance; and whether a religious teacher who lived in rural Palestine nineteen centuries ago has any significance whatever for the new urban and industrial civilization of today."

In those searching but honest words, Dr. Gilkey puts the whole temper and mode of this scientific age squarely before us.

And Doubting Thomas, as he has come to be called, was, I insist, one of the forerunners of this age, *the* forerunner in the ranks of Christian believers. And what is even more to the point, we find in him, if w study him carefully, our forerunner not only in th legitimate raising of doubts but in the only possible wa for the solution of those doubts.

In the first place, his was an honest doubt. A va amount of so-called doubt is not honest. It is dishones It is "confession avoidance," a defense mechanism, th salving over of moral cowardice and turpitude with th thinly guised profession of honest perplexity.

There are two questions to be asked of those modern young and old, who, as Dr. Gilkey says, are askin "whether an intelligent man can conclude that there any meaning in life." One is, whether they approac the whole matter with an open or a closed mind. Th other is, just what are they doing with life right now

INTELLECT ALONE IS FUTILE

For it is a matter of common knowledge that th value and meaning of life can never be ascertained b the intellect alone. They will never be discovered b discussion clubs or by cynical dilettantes who are livin like swine while they pursue their inquiries.

Some years ago I took it upon myself to read som of the effusions of the high priest of modern unbelie the man who probably more than any other has infl enced the thinking of the intellectual youth of our da When I found that he had cast aside all moral restrain advocated illicit relations between the sexes as an e sential to freedom, and agreed with his wife that eac should exercise that freedom—I had my doubts abou his honesty. And when, awhile ago, I learned that h wife had divorced him, had cast him off, I no longe had any question. I know that his doubt, his unbelie his conclusion that life has no meaning were nothin more than thinly camouflaged excuses for irration thinking and immoral living. And doubt of that kin can never be dispelled without a precedent moral rev lution.

The truth about life, its origin, its meaning, and i destiny, I repeat, can be known only by those who see that truth with every part of their complex personalitie The way to God, to the assurance of his reality, to knowledge of his nature and the experience of his pre ence is found only by those who adventure in that wa with all the powers which they possess. In the word of Holy Writ, "Ye shall seek me and ye shall find m when ye seek me with all your hearts." And that, insist, is what Doubting Thomas did.

It is fair to assume that that characteristic, that i quiring mind, that questioning nature, that innate skep ticism, was nothing new with Thomas. Without que tion, it was a part of him, an expression of his real sel the coming to a head of that which had been formin within him for years. A man doesn't become a doubte all at once.

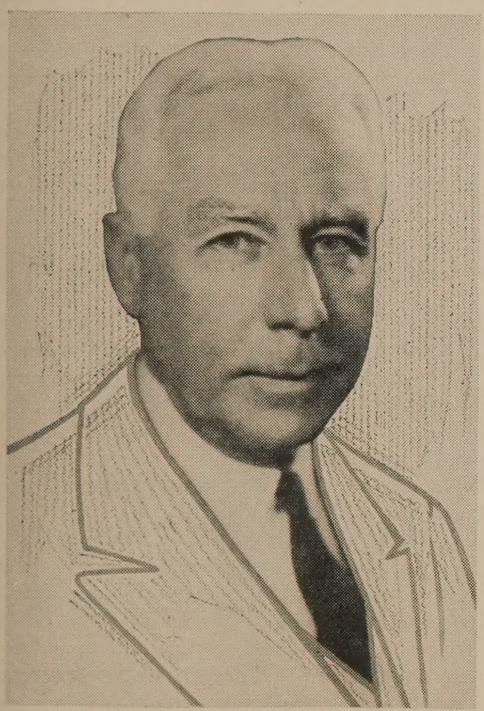
"Unless I see his hands with the mark of the nail unless I put my finger where the nails were and put m hand into his side—I refuse to believe it!" A positiv vehement expression like that was the bursting int flame of that which had been smoldering at the heart o his personality for years. It was the impulsive expre sion of his innermost nature.

And yet, where had he been all that time? He ha

been living the good life. He had been seeking the truth. For something like three years, he had been living with Jesus—one of his disciples, one of the inner circle, listening to his words, looking in his face, watching him as he ministered to mankind. He had been putting himself in the *way of knowing the way,* the truth, the meaning and end of life.

Oh, but you say, nevertheless he doubted. True! Absolutely true. Which proves only that more was needed before Thomas would reach his goal. And the fact to which we need to give attention is that this more was done.

That which follows Thomas' vehement utterance is



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more significant, if possible, than that which went before. He put himself deliberately and gladly in a position where he would have the best possible chance to find out the truth. We do not know why he was absent from the first meeting of the apostolic group after the crucifixion. It may be that this melancholy soul wanted to be by himself. There are times when every normal human being wants to get away from everybody and everything. There are times of crisis, of inner moral and spiritual conflict, when the whole world has to be shut out. And it may be that the two or three days following Jesus' death constituted such a time for Thomas.

He may have wanted to rethink the whole thing, to meditate upon all that had happened since he became a disciple, to bring back every last detail of those momentous years and reappraise it in the light of what had happened.

We do not know, nor do we need to know. What we do know is this: When the rest of the disciples came to him and cried, "We have seen the Lord," he did not deny their claim. He did not maintain a closed mind, prate about the incredible, the impossible. What he did do was to ask for adequate evidence, to demand more than hearsay. "Unless I see his hands with the mark of the nails," he told them, "and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe it."

And, what is infinitely more to the point, when more than a week later, the disciples were together again, Thomas was there. He was with those who did believe, the little group of the faithful. He was where he would have the chance to see the risen Lord if he was to be seen.

DOUBTERS WHO ARE COWARDS

My friends, that is a momentous fact, a fact of enormous importance not only in a study of Thomas but in a study of the whole matter of doubt and the resolution of that doubt. The man who says he doesn't believe in God and refuses to open the pages of the Bible while he continues to steep his sensitive mind in atheistic literature is not a doubter. He is a coward.

The man who consorts with moral and spiritual anarchists, with those who outdo the brute beasts in their slavery to their passions, while he refuses to darken the door of a Christian church or talk with a Christian leader is not a doubter. He is a coward.

The man who puts out of his life every constructive spiritual influence, who stifles every holy emotion or emerging conviction, who turns his back upon the light, who peers continually into the subterranean caverns of darkness and says, "I am a doubter," is a liar. The truth is not in him.

The honest doubter seeks the truth and seeks it with all his being. He opens his mind and heart to every ray of light that sheds its beneficent beams upon him. He goes where truth, God, life and light are to be found. He puts himself definitely and positively in the way of finding them. He acts before the evidence is all in. He becomes a seeker after truth in the truest sense of the term. He makes it possible for a seeking God to find him.

On the shelves of my library is a book entitled *Chaos and a Creed.* It is a remarkable book, written by a man who wandered for years in the slough of skepticism, but who at last found that which he craved—a faith that would meet every last legitimate demand of his complex nature.

In the first chapter of this spiritual autobiography this unknown who calls himself John Priceman says: "I have not gone to the Gospels for controversy. I have gone to them to get a creed I could live and die in."

Magnificent! I say. And tremendously significant. The man who wants to find a faith, a religion, who wants to find God and a creed "to live and die in" must go with an open mind and heart where God and a living creed may be found.

"MY LORD AND MY GOD"

There remains but a moment to learn the final and most important lesson that Thomas the doubter has to teach us. And it is contained in the final scene of this spiritual drama. At last, doubts and all, but open-minded

and open-hearted, he stood in the presence of the Master. He stood face to face with him whose assurances he had forgotten, but whose spiritual finality he could never forget. And he was met, doubter that he was, not with reproof but with loving kindness.

"Thomas," said the familiar voice, "look at my hands: put your finger here; and put your hand here into my side; cease your unbelief and believe."

You know what followed—one of the most dramatic, most gripping things in the Scripture record. "My Lord and my God," breathed the believing man. And out from that room he went, to become one of the immortals.

Yes, my friends, that is the way from doubt to belief: absolute honesty in the doubt! the seeking of the truth not merely with the intellect but with all there is of you! the deliberate and definite putting of yourself where God and truth may be found!

And then—when that evidence becomes all that human skepticism can ask—the glad surrender of the total self to him through whom God has been found.

Four Fundamentals of Faith

By Ferdinand M. Isserman

IN popular thinking, religion is frequently confused with ritual observance, avowal of creed or ethical conduct. An observant Jew is considered a good Jew. The signer of a confession of faith is considered a good Christian. An ethically good man is considered a good Jew and a good Christian. To do good is my religion, and believing in and living by the Golden Rule—these are common American credos.

Such judgments are made by the superficial whose knowledge of religion is limited. Doing good is no religion. It may refer to a system of ethics, and a system of ethics need not of necessity be allied with a religious tradition. Buddha offered such a system, a fine eightfold path of righteous living, while he denied the existence of the gods.

There are four important fundamentals in all historic religions which have stood the test of experience and have functioned in human lives over long periods of years. Without any one of them, religion is deficient.

I

The first is mysticism. It is a word from which we moderns shy. It suggests the mysterious, the unknown, perhaps even the unknowable. It implies limitations to the human mind, the frailty of the human intellect. At one time there was no unknown for us. We assumed that naught was hidden from our gaze. If anything was still unrevealed, then we had the implements with which to disclose it. With the telescope, we could lay bare the secrets of the distant heavens. With the microscope, we could magnify the tiniest particle which the eye was too imperfect to see. In the test tube of the laboratory we could wrest every secret from the substances of the earth. With the scalpel we could explore the mysteries of the human body. Potentially, we could know all, w could see all, we could conquer all. Such was the mod ern temper. Never was it illustrated better than b Dr. Clarence Darrow in a debate on "Is Religion Ne essary?" when he proved to his own satisfaction th nonexistence of the soul. Said he: "If you weigh body while a man's alive, and then weigh his body imm diately after his death, the result will be the same. there had been a soul in that body, the scales woul reveal it." Mr. Darrow, in this naive and primitiv reasoning, did not dispose of the mystery that confron every human being who faces life. If a corpse weigh as much as a living person, what then is the differenc between a speechless, motionless, rigid cadaver, and feeling, thinking, moving personality? To that myster Mr. Darrow had no answer. Such an admission of lack of knowledge, Mr. Darrow, like our generatio conscious, confident and cocksure, could not make. W did not care to acknowledge that life for us held an mystery.

Without such mystery, religion would have been non existent. God is the answer to the riddle of life, th solution to the puzzle of existence. If there were n mystery, there would be no God. He is the unknow able, who cannot be seen nor touched nor heard. Hi existence cannot be proved as the mathematician prove that one and one is two or as the chemist proves tha water is made up of two parts hydrogen and one pa oxygen. Belief in God is both a venture and an ad venture. It is a venture in the unknown, and an adven ture which transforms life. To most human beings, i is an adventure which must be embarked upon, for with out it life becomes impossible.

The experience of the human race throughout th centuries, in many lands, under a variety of circum stances, has demonstrated the universal hunger for Go A great philosopher said: "If there were no God, w would have to create one." Human life would be in complete without him. Whoever has walked beneat the star-spangled heavens, or bowed his head in th presence of beetling mountains, or gazed into the ap pealing smile of his own child, or seen a bud burst int blossom, has felt the urge to compose a psalm or to sin of the glories of a Creator. Whoever has thought o noble character, of the martyrdom of an Akiba, of th genius of a Shakespeare, of the courage and faith of Maimonides, has been certain that there must be a di vine answer to the mystery of existence. What indi vidual has not hungered for an understanding of th spirit behind nature, or what person has not felt th loneliness of man who lives but sixty or seventy year in a universe in which a thousand years are but as a day and the whole earth but as a speck of dust? Mysticism is the recognition, the awareness of God.

Prayer is the vehicle through which that awarenes expresses itself. It is prayer too that our age has foun most difficult, for prayer is essentially submission t God. Our age has been imbued with the desire not t submit, but to dominate; not to be conquered, but t conquer; not to be mastered, but to master. Therefore prayer has become difficult for us. Prayer is God's mas tery of man. Prayer is not man changing God, but Go changing man. Its fruit is humility, a quality unde

sirable in our surging civilization. In the biography of all great religious leaders, we find these mystical experiences. Jacob, as he slept on the bare mountain, dreamed of a ladder which connected him with the heavens. Moses, as he wandered in the desert, saw the burning bush. Isaiah, in his dream, heard the angels sing: "Holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts." Akiba, as he died at the stake, proclaimed his faith in the one God for whom he died, but whom he continued to love. Through God, the mysterious unknown, elements in the universe become known to man. Knowing God is

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an experience, a profound mystical experience. It is the basic element in religion. It is the flame of piety, the enthusiasm, the urge, the core behind all religions.

II

The second element in religion is morality. The result of the mystical experience will not be passivity, inactivity, a momentary balm, a temporary release from the reality of life, but will lead to noble conduct and a moral philosophy. For an ethical God will stimulate the ethical life. If the mystical experience makes man more like God, then the type of God-conception becomes all important. So frequently we hear the thought expressed that what we believe about God is unimportant. What a snare and what a delusion! What we believe about God is all-important. To him we ascribe the highest values of life. In him all our ideals are summed up, all our judgments concentrated. When early Hebrews believed in a tribal god, they gloried in a hero like Jacob, who stole from and cheated other tribes with divine sanction. When, through the teachings of the prophets, the idea of God was changed, the character of Jacob had to be changed, and he became Israel, champion of God, his new name symbolizing a change in his character.

When the God of the early Hebrews was conceived of in national terms, then what mattered it what happened to other peoples! Then Jonah could refuse to go to Nineveh to save its people from destruction. But when the conception of God had changed from a national to a universal one, Jonah had to go and save the people of Nineveh. Jonah was driven to action by his communion with an ethical universal God.

What was the effect of the mystical experience upon Moses? It forced him to return to Egypt. It led him to face a mighty Pharaoh. It inspired him to a life of service and of consecration, of dangers and of difficulties. God mastered him. What was the influence upon the life of Isaiah of his fellowship with God? From being a priest, smug, sleek and comfortable, he became a prophet, hated, imprisoned, the champion of unpopular causes, arraying himself against royalty and nobility, against his own class, preaching among people whose ears were closed and whose hearts were frozen. In Hosea, too, his religious experiences resulted in a transformation of character. From hating his dissolute wife, he learned to love her as God loves his erring children. Tolstoi's mystical experience resulted in a life of simlicity and of devotion to humanity. "Holy shall ye be, for I the Lord thy God am holy" expresses the Jewish conception of the relationship between religion and ethics. The holiness of man emanates from the holiness of God. Hosea taught love because he recognized that love was an attribute of God. Amos taught ethical conduct after his insight into the ethical nature of the divine. In Leviticus we read, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," and then the concluding phrase, "I am the Lord." Here we have the recognition of the religious sanction of morality, and we see clearly that the urge, the impulse for righteous conduct, emanates from contacts with God.

It is frequently contended that morality can exist independent of religion, that ethical systems can be built without God. There have been many groups organized for human betterment which have been atheistic. That is how they have described themselves; but in their fervor, in their enthusiasm, in their certainty of the righteousness of their cause, the psychologist of religion sees the religious spirit garbed in new terminology. Without a religious background, without the impulse from communion with God, an ethical system is apt to be cold, incapable of inspiring enthusiasm. It may readily wilt and shrivel up. When morality is linked with God, it is linked with eternity. An ideal emanating from religion brooks no defeat. It is aligned with the Infinite. It is certain of ultimate triumph. It can be refreshed continuously despite setbacks and reverses. It has a fountainhead of energy, a source of strength upon which to draw, and through which to revivify the frail and feeble and lagging spirit of man.

So vast seem the problems of our society—poverty, disease, injustice—that mere ethical pronouncements are insufficient to induce men to change them. A religious experience, communion with God, can create essential enthusiasm and can give men in this crisis of human affairs the consciousness that their cherishing of moral

values is not vain or futile. That is why Emanuel Kant, Germany's philosopher, stated that he must believe in God because God is the guarantor of the moral system. It is true that there have been individuals who have had mystical experiences without moral conduct, but their religion was incomplete and inadequate. Out of the religious conception there has flowered the dream of a united humanity, in which hatred, bigotry, prejudice will be unknown. With the aid of the religious spirit, that dream can be realized. Morality is therefore the second fundamental in religion.

III

The third fundamental is reason. There must be nothing in religion which contradicts human reason. The mysticism of a faith commences where reason proves inadequate. A religion without reason becomes superstition, and leads to fanaticism and to bigotry. There have been many people who have been conscious of God, who have subscribed to a lofty morality, and yet have persecuted, hated and killed in the name of religion. Such were the Puritans in New England. They were religious people. They were desperately anxious to be good. Because they were religious and good, they persecuted Quakers and burnt witches. They did so in the name of a god of love. The same thing was true of the Inquisitors. They tortured human beings. They tore them on the rack. They broke them upon the wheel in the name of mercy and humanity. They believed it right to destroy their bodies in order to save their souls from eternal damnation. What was wrong with the Puritans and the Inquisitors? There was no reason in their religion. They were fanatics and bigots. They lacked knowledge and understanding. The religious persecutors of all ages did not know that there are other great religions besides their own, that God has sent prophets to all peoples, that more than one Bible has been written, and that more than one creed has helped men to lead godly lives. If they had known more about religion, they could not have persecuted those who differed from them.

Thus reason would make fanaticism impossible. Knowledge would indicate that religion is not dependent upon one book nor upon one leader. If the Bible had not been written, if the prophets had never spoken, if the psalmists had never sung, if there had been no Moses and no Jesus, no Mohammed and no Confucius, men still would have sought God. They sought him before these men were known and before Bibles were written. They will continue to seek him after these men are forgotten, and their Bibles destroyed. Thus does reason strengthen faith.

Reason is also necessary in order to help us define what good conduct is. Micah urged men to do justly and to love mercy. But what is mercy and what is justice? Plato wrote a book about justice. What is justice in our present situation? Is unemployment insurance justice? Is the Securities Act justice? Is the "Share-the-Wealth" program justice? Is the remonetization of silver justice? Is the NRA justice? What is goodness, and what virtue? Knowledge furnishes the answer—knowledge of human beings, knowledge of the structure of society. Recently Professor Morgan of Northwestern University said that most insane people owe their misfortune to bad training in childhood. The parents of most of the insane were good people. Undoubtedly, to do good was their religion. Yet, because of their ignorance they did the wrong thing for their children. Without understanding, religion and morality are apt to become travesties. How wise were the rabbis when they said, "The ignorant man cannot be pious." Reason and knowledge are essentials of adequate religion.

IV

The fourth fundamental is ritual. A religion of mysticism, of morality and of reason must find its way to life, must be taught to human beings. Every teacher knows that the teaching process is slow; that there must be continuous repetition, and innumerable techniques whereby truths are made part of the lives of their pupils. So too a religion must have a teaching technique. Ritual is religion's teaching technique. The moral principles of religion, its spiritual foundation, its rational goals, must somehow or other be made to penetrate into the hearts and permeate the souls of religious devotees. That is what ritual can do. Ritual is the poetry of faith. It sums up, in the language of symbolism, the mysteries, the ethics and the truth of religion. It expresses them so that the simplest can understand and grasp them. Let us see what ritual might mean.

Here we are, all living in a very busy world. We are concerned about our immediate tasks. If we are heads of households, we must provide food, shelter, clothing and education to those dependent upon us. If we are housewives, we must keep the house in order, look after the physical well-being and the moral well-being of children, and live within our budgets. There are so many cares that overwhelm us, so many petty concerns of life, that we are apt to forget the ultimates or the goals of existence. Immersed in the struggle of existence, we may ignore the fact that we are but little lower than angels, and made in the image of God. How can we be reminded if not through ritual?

Take the pious orthodox Jew, who thrice daily, no matter how important his work, no matter how keen the struggle to survive, pauses for fifteen minutes to say his prayers. Shall we scornfully refer to that worship as mechanical? Just pausing alone for three periods of meditation during the day is of spiritual value. A great psychologist's report of mental cases, who were cured just by a brief daily pause to consider the fundamentals of life, is significant. In these prayers, thrice daily, the pious Jew reminds himself of the unity of God, of the brotherhood of man, of the duty to love one's neighbor, and to do justly. What good may not come from such experience? Take the Mezzuzah nailed on the threshhold of a house. Here comes the tired business man, vexed by problems, entering his home in ill humor; he is annoyed by petty trifles, which in the light of history are the nth degree of nothingness. The symbol on the doorpost, as he enters his door, reminds him of God, of the ultimate purpose of life.

Here is the confessional of the Roman Catholic Church, the object of so much criticism and suspicion, regarded by many as an outworn superstition and by

others as part of a sinister conspiracy against humanity. Along come psychologists and psychoanalyists, who speak of the sense of guilt and of sin from which the confessional, for centuries, sought to bring man relief. The method of the psychoanalyist and psychologist is to induce the human being to speak out his innermost thoughts, to confess, so that the healer of the soul may interpret his malady and know the proper balm for his wounds. Thus the confessional anticipated the most modern science. Thus can ritual function in the lives of men.

The rituals of the great religions embody noble history. They contain the records of martyred spirits, of sensitive human beings. They contain moments when the greatness of the human soul is revealed and the incomparable majesty of the human spirit is disclosed. Without these histories, mankind would be impoverished. The knowledge of these great spirits and the memory of these great moments are the most treasured possessions of the race. Through ritual, men are reminded of them. The observance of Easter serves to remind our Christian neighbors of the immortality of the soul. Must human beings be taught each year that the soul is immortal? Why would not one lecture on that subject suffice? Why is it necessary, with poetry and drama and historic pageantry, to prepare human beings for weeks and weeks for the climactic Easter when the belief in the immortality of the soul will be vindicated? Because through this poetry, through this ceremony, through this pageantry, that great spiritual truth is woven into human consciousness.

Professor Lindeman, in an address, said that one of the great functions of the home was that it served as an abode in which the human being took root, and through which patriotism and a feeling of security were developed. He said that in other days families were bound to the land, lived in certain places generation after generation, and from that knowledge drew some zest for living.

While he was speaking, I thought of Jews who in the Middle Ages could not own land and were forced continuously to wander. Yet, the Jew too was rooted more firmly in this world through his home. What was the Jews' abode? The delightful religious experiences which centered about the home. These gave the Jew rooting. If he did not think of home as a certain country, or as a certain farm, he did think of home as a center of great experiences, where he had observed the Succoth festival, the Pesach festival, the Shavuoth festival, and Purim and Chanukah. With these observances came the memory of great events. Through them he learned of Moses, the lawgiver and emancipator; of persecution and bitterness, and of their conquest through the power of God. He learned of feeble people fighting for noble ideals, of crude mountaineers mastering trained legions. He learned the story of heroism, the record of martyrdom.

That is what home means to the Jew. That is his abode. In these memories he has security. Through them he becomes heartened, and with them he is prepared to live in a world frequently hostile. Even when he wanders away from home, even then he cannot be uprooted. There was Heinrich Heine, who had abandoned the faith, who had uprooted himself from his tradition, who lived a homeless, embittered, desolate life. While lying upon the mattress which proved to be his deathbed, he relived the early experiences of his youth, and found in them the courage to face the unknown, and to march into that land from which no traveler returneth. In one of his last poems, he wrote: "Can it be dusk so soon? Or is this deeper darkness? Is that you, Mother? How did you come? Where are the candles? Over my bed a strange tree gleams—half filled: With stars and birds whose white notes glimmer through, Its seven branches now that all is stilled. What? Friday-night and all my songs forgotten? Wait—I still can sing Sh'ma Yisroel Adonai Elohenu, Adonai Echod." That is the power of ritual in life. It makes religion vital. It reminds of eternal values. It is an essential of adequate faith.

These then are the fundamentals of religion. The mystical experience which makes us conscious of God and the resultant morality which inspires us to strive to be like him, and compels us to lead a life of purity and goodness. A knowledge of human affairs and of our own nature so that the religious drive towards goodness may be channeled to social advantage and to universal human welfare, thus eliminating, through reason, bigotry and fanaticism and lighting up the way to the good, the true and the beautiful. And finally the ritual of religion, symbolizing its fundamentals, penetrating our daily lives, reminding us that we are not merely business men or housewives, workers or clerks, making a living and accumulating goods, but reminding us continually that we are made in the image of God, and little lower than angels.

Mysticism, morality, reason and ritual are the four fundamentals of faith.

Why Read The Bible

Bishop Paul B. Kern, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, recently wrote in detail the reasons why he reads the Bible. These reasons, he says, have grown out of the experiences of his own life.

"I read my Bible," he says, "because, 1. within its pages I find power for the ordering of my inner life; 2. because it offers a way of escape from those inner perils which threaten our modern life; 3. because in its pages are found the secrets by which men walk the pathways of light and hope and freedom; 4. because it assures me that man is supremely dear to God; 5. because it points the way to world brotherhood; 6. because it tells me whither I am bound and why; 7. because it offers me sound social philosophy; 8. because it teaches me, in the words of Emerson, that 'the lesson of life is to believe what the years and the centuries say, as against the hours'."

When I would beget content and increase confidence in the power and wisdom and providence of Almighty God, I will walk the meadows, by some gliding stream, and there contemplate the lilies that take no care, and those very many other little living creatures that are not only created, but fed—man knows not how—by the goodness of God, and therefore trust in him.—*Izaak Walton.*

God Is In the Garden

By Bruce S. Wright

WHO does not love a garden! When the late Edward Bok wanted to do something that would live, that would be both useful and beautiful, he planned a garden of trees and shrubs, vines and flowers, winding walks and shimmering pools. In the midst of the garden he caused to be erected a tower of matchless beauty. In the top of the tower he placed a carillon of bells whose music would vie with the music of the singing birds. He named it the Singing Tower. On a tablet in the garden one may read these lines:

> The kiss of the sun for pardon,
> The song of the birds for mirth;
> You are nearer the heart of God in a garden
> Than any place else on earth.

I love these lines, though I am not willing to subscribe to them in toto. I prefer to believe that one is nearer God, at least as near, in a home caring for little children, in a hospital ministering to the sick; that one draws very near God when he comforts the sorrowing, feeds the hungry, helps the fallen, gives a cup of cold water in the Master's name, or engages in honest toil. This, however, does not entirely set aside the principle contained in this lovely quatrain—one is very near the heart of God in a garden. I do not see how anyone can spend any considerable length of time in a garden without having a deep and genuine consciousness of the presence of God.

GARDENS ARGUE FOR GOD

A garden is an effective argument for the existence of God. Theologians advance ponderous arguments for the being of God. What better, more convincing or more winsome argument than a garden! At least this is what Thomas Brown thought, for he wrote:

> A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot!
> Rose plot,
> Fringed pool,
> Ferned grot—
> The veriest school
> Of peace; and yet the fool
> Contends that God is not.
> Not God! In a garden! When the eve is cool?
> Nay, but I have a sign:
> 'Tis very sure God walks in mine.

God walked in the first garden. I love that picture in Genesis. It is the picture of a garden; in the midst of the garden stand a man and a woman. And someone else was there, for the author of Genesis tells us that "they heard the voice of God in the garden in the cool of the day." It was the voice of condemnation. One does hear the voice of condemnation, even in a garden, when he has done wrong. But one may hear also the voice of comfort and assurance in the garden in the cool of the day. Among my friends I have a superannuated minister, a poet. He is past eighty years of age, but straight as an Indian in form and carriage, and alert mentally as a man of fifty. He used to visit me frequently in my study. I would hear a quick step along the hall, the knocker on my study door would sound "Come in," I would say. The door would open and there would stand Benjamin Copeland, the author of half a dozen of our hymns. "I have something here I want to read to you." Then he would read me some lines he had written. One morning he read these lines about a garden. That Genesis phrase, "in the cool of the day," had been singing in his soul, and here was the result:

> In the cool of the day in the garden's hush,
> And not in the mad world's scurry and rush,
> Can the still small voice of the Lord be heard,
> And the heart drink deep of the living Word.
>
> In the cool of the day in the garden's calm
> I shall find for earth's woes Heaven's healing balm;
> For His promise is richer than April showers,
> And His presence is frankincense and flowers.
>
> I shall know, by the softer light in the sky,
> That the Lord of the lilies is passing by;
> I shall feel in the violet's sweeter breath,
> The touch of His hand who is stronger than death.
>
> In the cool of the day in the garden, Lord,
> Let me hear Thy voice, let me know Thy Word.
> I shall see the path, I shall find the way,
> In the garden with Thee, in the cool of the day.

The ancients loved gardens even as we do. They planned and carried through to completion indescribably beautiful gardens. The Hanging Gardens of Babylon are not a myth; they were real, one of the wonders of the ancient world. The Hebrews loved their gardens and lavished their affection and attention upon them. They also served as texts for exhortation and admonition. The prophet, wishing to describe the life of righteousness, prosperity and happiness, likened it to a "watered garden." The gardens of the Bible are well known, they command our interest and love: the Garden of Eden, the Garden of Gethsemane, the Garden of the burial and resurrection of Jesus.

Where was the Garden of Eden located? Who knows, and why should we know? Wherever it was, it was the garden of opportunity and responsibility for emerging humanity. The Garden of Gethsemane is well authenticated. It is well cared for. Travelers in the Holy Land say that it is the one spot in Palestine that is well kept and clean, that gives evidence of loving attention. The Garden of the burial of Jesus was a garden belonging to Joseph of Arimathea. Early in the morning of the resurrection day Mary Magdalene came to this garden and stood at the entrance of the tomb. It was dark. Standing there, making anxious inquiry about her Lord, Jesus himself appeared. Mary did not know him; she supposed he was the gardener. Well, Jesus is the gardener, the gardener of life.

CHRIST A LOVER OF BEAUTY

Christ is the gardener of the flowers of beauty, fragrance and adornment. Beauty and adornment have their place in life. Such flowers he referred to when he spoke to his disciples who had rebuked the woman for breaking the alabaster box of ointment. "What waste!" was their comment. Jesus did not so consider it, for he ever contended that "life is more than meat and the body

than raiment." He ever believed that "man shall not live by bread alone." He may have been a pagan, but he had a Christian's heart who said, "If I had ten cents and were hungry, I would spend five for bread to feed my body and five for hyacinths to feed my soul." I do no violence to Scripture when I paraphrase St. Paul's admonition to the Christians in Philippi thus: "Finally, gardeners, whatsoever flowers are true, whatsoever flowers are honest, whatsoever flowers are just, whatsoever flowers are pure, whatsoever flowers are lovely, whatsoever flowers are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if any fragrance, cultivate these flowers."

These flowers of beauty and adornment, in their

Bruce S. Wright

abundance and variety, may well be classed under the one generic: love. And if you want to visit the most wonderful garden that the world has ever known, walk the paths of the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels and have not love. . . ." What a riot of flowers in this garden!

"I am a 100 per cent American," was the boast of a falsely-patriotic American citizen, "I hate Jews, Catholics and niggers." "I am a 200 per cent American," counter-boasted a man who overheard him, "I hate everybody." God never says a thing like that; his garden is not a garden of hate, it is a garden of love. "For God so loved the world. . . ." Christ, the great gardener, bids us cultivate the flowers of love for life's adornment.

But life is for utility as well as adornment. Therefore Christ, gardener of life, is also the gardener of the things of sustenance. The body needs to be fed. The farmer is an important personage in our nation's life. If the farmers should engage in a sit-down strike what would become of our towns and cities? My admiration goes out to the faithful farmer. His is a constant battle with pests, droughts and floods. The farmer's work is never done. Likewise the farmer's battle is a ceaseless battle.

One summer in the northwest hundreds of thousands of acres of grain, a total of 45,000 square miles, are attacked and destroyed by grasshoppers. Another summer a long-extended drought burns up the crops of much of the middle west, and thousands of head of cattle must be sacrificed because there is no water or food for them. How the farmer has the courage to continue I do not see! I think it is because of his faith: he works so intimately and directly with nature and God. He knows that the laws of nature, in the long run, are in his favor; he knows that, after all, the God of love is on his side.

GROWING GARDENS AMID DESOLATION

A garden means life, life even in the midst of death. *A World Can End* is the title of a fascinating little book written by Irina Skariatina. She lived through the closing years of the tsar's reign, and through and beyond the Russian revolution. At seven years of age she began keeping a diary, a habit which she maintained even through the trials and persecutions of the revolution. She was repeatedly thrown into prison, her strength was sapped, but she never lost courage, hope or faith. Finally she was condemned to solitary confinement. What could she do? How could she stand that? Heretofore she had had companionship, but now she was alone. "What can one do in a tiny cell, day after day, night after night?" she asked herself. Then a light flashed into her soul. "I have it," she thought, "I will organize my life." She did not have pencil or paper; she had nothing but her mind, but she proceeded to plan her day. Here it is, as she reported it:

7:00 a.m.—get up, wash, breakfast.
8:00 to 8:30—gymnastics.
8:30 to 9:00—singing.
9:00 to 10:00—history.
10:00 to 11:00—mathematics.
11:00 to 12:00—dancing.
12:00 to 2:00 p.m.—dinner and rest.
2:00 to 3:00—musical problems.
3:00 to 4:00—geography.
4:00 to 5:00—travel.
5:00 to 6:00—rest and supper.
6:00 to 7:00—pacing up and down the cell.
7:00 to 8:00—books [she had no books except those her memory recalled].
8:00 to 9:00—travel.
9:00 to 10.—and later, leisure for any kind of thoughts.

Thus her solitary confinement became a university course, a liberal education. If this hunted, harassed woman could command the determination to so organize her life, surely we in our freedom can grow flowers in our garden. Her soul was a garden which she had cultivated through the years, and in the time of drought and flood and pest Christ, the gardener of life, saw that her garden did not fail her, but gave her sustenance for body and spirit.

Here is another garden-poem from the pen of my friend, Benjamin Copeland:

What have I planted in Florida,
Or California fair,
That I should ignore my orchard's bloom,
For the orange blossoms fair?

Nature is sure to come hoce to one most
When he is most at home;
A stranger like himself she proves
To him whose footsteps roam.

The dooryard's lilac, lilly, rose,
Her dearest beauty shall disclose;
And with him, in life's daily round,
Shall be the peace which there is found.

Where is the loveliest garden in all the world? In California or Florida? No, the loveliest garden is in your own soul, for life is a garden, and Christ is the understanding gardener of your life.

The Failures of Jesus

By W. C. Besselievre

And how is it written of the Son of man, that he should suffer many things and be set at nought? Mark 9:12.

THE thought that Jesus had ever failed caught me unawares. It chilled as a sudden blast of cold wind after a period of warmth. It struck with the stunning force of an unexpected blow. For all my life I had been nurtured on the idea of a triumphant Jesus who ruled over the world, the flesh and the devil with effortless ease. Time and tide, which await the convenience of no ordinary mortal, became subject unto him, as he swallowed up the first into his eternity and the second quieted before his soft-spoken word. I had heard the angels singing allelujahs to the new-born Savior, and God's praise of the Beloved Son in whom he was well pleased, and Peter's confession of the Christ as the Son of the living God. I saw the devil flee from him, the multitudes marvel at his words, the Pharisees confounded, the disciples moved by love to leave all and follow him. The panorama of his earthly living fitted well with the glory of one who was, before Abraham, in the bosom of the Father and it glided equally well into the glory of a resurrection which placed him on the right hand of God. To be sure, there was the shadow of a cross. But did not the light break through the clouds to focus a dramatic illumination upon him, turning the dull brown of that rugged structure into a blazing copper not unlike burnished gold? And was this not the Redeemer, the Victor over sin and death? Like one who knows the end of the story, I could always hear the joyous pealing of Easter bells, see the empty tomb behind the otherwise appalling darkness of a Calvary. How, then, could I visualize the failures of Jesus?

Nineteen centuries of glorification have added to the picture of triumph. The eleven, the five thousand men besides women and children, the multitude of the triumphal entry—these all are now but a handful lost in the mighty hosts which have since joined in praise of him. Great nations are now called Christian. His nar is honored in every language and nearly every dialc under the sun. The cross has become a familiar ar haloed symbol the wide world over. How then, wh little children, gentle women and manly men call hi Lord until the reverent whispers of each unite into thunderous roar of approval—how then, can one spe of the failures of Jesus?

Yet it is so. The record is plain to read. Thoug the Scribes and Pharisees could make no adequate r sponses to his queries, Jesus was never able to impre them seriously as a religious leader. Nicodemus, to sure, sought an opportunity for further investigation ar was privileged to listen to the profoundest personal u terance of Jesus' faith, yet nothing of moment ever can of it. Jesus failed to reach the spiritual leaders of h day. The bald fact stands. When ten lepers were heale only one came back to offer a word of thanks. The oth nine are symbolic of those who accepted the favor of th Son of Man and hearing, heard not. With these, to Jesus failed. Recall the awe-struck multitude which li tened to the immortal words he uttered upon the Moun Soon, so very soon, they were turning away from hir their backs eloquent in proclaiming another failure Jesus. The Master stood before Pilate. One woul think that his divine poise, his majestic calm, his utte blamelessness would have won an ally in the Roma ruler. It was not so. He who had legions of angels a his command was powerless in the grip of circumstanc and he could not win reprieve.

HIS OWN RECEIVED HIM NOT

There is an abiding pathos in the fact that he can unto his own and his own received him not; came wit the teacher's ideal to enlighten, with the father's ideal t guide, with the mother's ideal to love—and they woul have none of him. One cannot think of Jesus as ir sensible to it all. Being neither wood nor stone, bu man, one can well understand the etching of stern line about his mouth, and, in his eyes, the coming of brood ing shadows that hung as somber curtains over the sor rows of his soul.

The story is not yet told, nor even roughly sketched One can forgive the fickleness of the mob, can bear th heckling of envious enemies, can sympathize with th careless acceptance of favors from strangers and eve the hesitance of men in high places to offend their con stituencies; but what shall one say when it is "mine ow familiar friend who hath done this"? Then the prob sinks deep, twisting and turning in the wound. "Hov long shall I bear with you, O ye of little faith?" crie Jesus to his disciples. Did he foresee their desertion i the garden? Did he know that for the propagation o the gospel he must depend upon a converted persecuto who never saw his face, nor heard his voice, nor felt th friendly clasp of his hand? His mother and brother followed after him declaring that he "was beside him self." Did he find some small comfort in the provisio of them as they later sat with the little company i Jerusalem, hugging their provincial and exclusive mes sianic Judaism to themselves? Ah, here among th intimates to whom he had opened the innermost sanc tuary of his soul; here among those with whom he ha

shared the sacred comradeship of the home; here where he had most right to expect understanding, loving sympathy, the uttermost of loyal devotion, he seems again to have failed. These never entered into full understanding and none, with the possible exception of Peter, ever counted for very much. Therefore, after he had walked the Via Dolorosa, and the wood which he had borne was made to bear him, there rings suddenly out into the dark a very human cry, wrung from one whose faith is strained to the breaking point: "My God, why hast *Thou* forsaken me!" With his loved Lord, too, he seemed to have failed. How can one sip vinegar and

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gall from a sop when one's soul is already saturated with it?

Surely these incidents mark a humanity which Jesus shares in common with us all. For what one of us does not know the blight of disillusion, the hard blows of opposition, the cruel barb of misunderstanding? What one of us has not, at some time or other, had his friendly overtures spurned, his gifts of soul carelessly received? What one of us has not bowed as a cherished dream has come tumbling down, whirled and smashed into fragments by the winds of public disapproval? And when he has crept homeward to the natural refuge for comfort and the assuagement of sore wounds, found there, perhaps, an incomprehensible blindness? Who has not, in the secret of his own heart, ascended Calvaries of crucifixion where God himself seemed blind, deaf and mute? Though we have done what we could, failure was the answer. Indeed, at this point we are all "partakers in his suffering."

There would be no point in dwelling on the lugubrious, nor in accenting the failures of Jesus unless something positive can be gained from it, a something positive which will hearten and strengthen when the inevitable cloud-laden day shall come again. I point you to the fact that though Jesus failed, time and again, he can never be called a failure in himself. This is so—and I find here my first reason for encouragement—because, though all the world seemed allied against him—Jesus still "carried on."

NO CYNICISM IN JESUS

In Margaret Pedlar's *Bitter Heritage* we find a young woman, Herrick Landris, her faith in humanity shaken by the baseness of a father and the desertion of a lover in her time of need, working out her own salvation in fear and trembling to this conclusion: "One must take life as it comes and get on with it." Ah—"and get on with it"—that is the essence of good sportsmanship as we find it in Jesus. To adapt oneself to conditions, to be knocked down and rise again—that is the courage religion ought to breathe into the soul of its believers. For I conceive that the business of religion is neither to readjust the physical world by cozening it to do our will, nor is it the business of religion to bring about social reformation. Though both have their place in the scheme of man's control over his destiny, the place of religion is primarily to help him live victoriously in the world as he has it. Jesus did that.

Consider this, too: Jesus did not permit his failures to embitter him and turn the sweet reasonableness of his soul into the acids of cynicism. How easily he might have come to see life through the eyes of Omar, as an empty goblet, or beheld himself as one of those puppet pawns, checked and slain, to be laid back into the closet of obscurity by an arbitrary Fate. He might have concluded with the writer of Ecclesiastes that laughter is mad and all life a vanity and a chasing after wind. Instead, however, we hear him speaking words like these: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you"; "I came that your joy might be made full"; "I have overcome the world"; "It is my father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom"; "The son of man, if he be lifted up, will draw all men unto himself." Was he mad to talk this way in the face of such dismal failures?

JESUS' BELIEF IN LIFE

No. In this he was never more sane nor the evidence of his balanced judgment more evident. Not in spite of, but because of, the facts of his life Jesus was an optimist. If this statement appears contrary to the facts as emphasized this morning, it need only be called to mind that Jesus himself made no such emphasis. That is the very point to be driven home. He saw life whole, which is the prerequisite of any valuable conclusion as to the meaning of things. And optimism, far from being the result of false accent upon the good or deliberate blindness to the evil, is the outlook of one who, after careful measurement, is forced to believe life holds more good than evil.

Ernest Dimnet in his *Art of Thinking* points out clearly the reason why a superficial pessimism is prevalent. He bids one consider his reaction when, after having had two weeks' pleasure visiting friends, some little momentary misunderstanding arises. A word, a look, a

gesture, and the soul is deeply cut. Immediately the fun is spoiled and one wants to go home and nurse his wounds. Over twenty thousand minutes of joy have been swallowed up in one minute of pain. In other words, pessimism is born only because one minute of unhappiness is allowed to stand as an impenetrable barrier to further joy. Such an attitude is a betrayal of common sense. It is a species of mild insanity holding within itself possibilities of dangerous development.

JESUS' FAITH IN GOD ENDURED

Failures are not of life's warp and woof, else no pleasing pattern would ever be. Mistakes do not outmeasure correctness, else life's pencil would need reversal and a bit of lead be united with a great eraser. Failure is not the usual outcome, else nothing would ever be accomplished; and frustration and pain are the exceptions not the rule. We who live in the great plains country might well consider that it is only the irregularities in the average evenness of the land which focus our attention. Thus concluded Jesus who beheld life *sub specie aeternitatis,* and there was no room within him for the cynic.

Consider this: that under the pressure of Jesus' failures he did not lose faith in the loving Father. It is one thing to carry on grimly or stoically, coming up again and again for more punishment; it is another thing to do this while still holding an unshakable faith in the essential benevolence of the universe. As Gaius Glenn Atkins well reminds us, one or two isolated discouragements do not make a pessimist any more than an equally small number of swallows make a summer or snowflakes pile a drift. It is the sum of "cumulative discouragement" and frustration which buries faith. It is, then, from the midst of mountains of trouble which have been piled over one, grain by grain, that the cry goes up, "Is God dead?" or, "Is God punishing me for my sins?" Either it seems that Deity has been disclosed at last as a fond illusion under which former pleasant days have sunned themselves, or that the smiling face of God was only a mask to hide a hateful and malignant heart.

ARGUING GOD'S GOODNESS FUTILE

Without doubt one could apply oneself with subtle dialectic to prove the proposition that God is good. He might balance the goods and evils of the world against one another and demonstrate, by the preponderance of good, the benevolence of God. He might hypothecate goodness and bring all manner of illustration to carry conviction. He might do all this, but to what end would the argument serve? In the hour of trial debate is of no avail, for the sufferer is in no mood to listen nor has he the energy to carry through to a clear conclusion. Either beforetime he has developed a faith or he has not. Now, he either wings his way into the heart of a loving God as instinctively as a homing pigeon returns to his cot, or he moves out into a shuddering darkness of uncertainty, homeless and alone. Blessed is the man who, having found the precious possession of faith, clings to it in the smashing deeps as tenaciously as a barnacle to a ship's hull.

Thanks be to God for the inspiration of those unsung heroes and heroines who have gone through life with aching hearts, yet with heads held high. Than be to God for a Jesus who, when all was finished, cou look up into the sphinx-face of eternity saying, "Fath into thy hands I commend my spirit."

And so my conquering Christ is come back to me with a difference. No longer does he possess the smoo skin and soft, curved lips of a grown-up boy whose pa to victory was smoothed by omnipotence. No long does a play-actor crown of thorns adorn his brow imitation nailmarks center in his hands. Rather is a man, full grown, square jawed, bearing in his bo real scars which mark one who has won through batt against tremendous odds, and who holds fast in his so that faith which defies all seeming. "Though he slay yet will I trust him" is a word become flesh once mo Though he suffers many things and is set at nought, the very determination of his onward pressing, by t undisturbed balance of his sane judgment, by the cou geous trust which faltered at the most for but a m ment—by these things he has won the right to say, have overcome the world."

And it is this one who failed and overcame that hear saying unto all men: "The work that I do shall do also, and greater works than these shall ye do."

Captivity Turned

By George W. Buckner

The Lord turned the captivity of Job when he pray for his friends. Job 42:10.

IN the opinion of so discriminating a critic as Vict Hugo we have in the book of Job "perhaps the gre est masterpiece of the human mind." One need not gi to the scripture that particular peak of supremacy share the brilliant Frenchman's appreciation for beauty of style and arrangement, its depth of philosop its height of aspiration or the haunting cadence of poetry. Who wrote it, God knows. Whether it poetic history or dramatic poetry, who can say? Poet it is in spirit as well as in form; poetry at its best, bea tiful, rhythmic, moving. History is there; not just t history of a man named Job who dwelt in the land Uz but the history of every son of man that ever live Drama is there; not the drama of the artificial a theatrical, but the drama of reality with its light a shadow, its supreme joy and poignant sorrow, the dra of the summit and the abyss known to the heart every suffering, aspiring soul.

Structurally the book embodies a prologue, a poe and an epilogue. With consummate artistry the t chapters of prose prologue picture the rise to deserv affluence and well-being and the mysterious, precipito decline to poverty, calamity, dejection and spiritual ca tivity of a man known as "perfect and upright, one th fears God and eschews evil." Ruined, childless, phy ically broken and abhorrent, this man is seen receivi three friends of fairer days who come to condole a remain to rebuke.

The body of the book, nearly forty chapters of poet in dramatic form, is concerned with the effort of the

three friends and Job to discover through the processes of orderly argumentation the philosophy of captivity, the secret of human woe, especially as related to the bitter experiences of Job.

In the epilogue comes the happy ending, wherein we read that "The Lord turned the captivity of Job." Restored in opulence and reputation, surrounded by affectionate children and appreciative friends, we learn of him that "the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning." In a prolonged Indian summer of prosperity and piety he lived many years "and saw his sons and his sons' sons, even four generations." And at length he died, "being old and full of days." So closes the perfect epilogue.

FREEDOM IN CAPTIVITY

Captivity is no invariable state. Its degree of reality is determined not by the external and visible but by the spiritual and the unseen. A Paul, languishing in the enchained darkness of a Mamertine dungeon, awaiting the executioner's approach, may be free because upheld by the conviction that, whatever the outward circumstances of its existence, to live is Christ and that to die —well, to die, that is all clear gain. There is no captivity here! But a Nero, living in imperial luxury and surrounded by fawning sycophants, may, for all his pride and power of place, cower within his own being, the abject slave of vice and greed, the mark of the beast upon his soul. And that is captivity!

Yet none may question the reality of Job's captivity. His abundant property was stolen by marauding bands or destroyed by the elements. His servants were slain and his children met with violent death. Yet these catastrophes did not in themselves constitute Job's captivity, for we read that "he held fast his integrity." Smitten with a loathsome disease and stripped of his reputation, he crouched beside his wife only to have her reproach him with the scornful admonition to "curse God and die." Still is his soul not captive. "What?" he exclaims, "shall we receive good at the hand of God and shall we not receive evil?" In anguish of soul he cries:

> Even young children despise me,
> All my familiar friends abhor me,
> And they whom I loved are turned against me.

And that is not captivity.

The depths are reached only in that pitiful passage of surrender of the soul to despair as he mourns:

> My spirit is consumed, my days are extinct,
> The grave is ready for me.

Captivity comes when the spirit is consumed. The gates are barred when the soul surrenders. Job's captivity is here complete.

THE WAY TO RELEASE

But the deeper significance of the career of Job lies not in the fact that he suffered but in this—that in the end he came forth as a victor; and our own concern is not with the soul's imprisonment but with its release, not with the captivity but with its turning. That focal point toward which all the elements of the story dramatically converge is reached as we read that "the Lord turned the captivity of Job."

Nor does the search lie far afield for those who seek in the story the basic principle of the release of the captive soul. The truth may not be just that which is at first most apparent but it is there and may be found.

One might on first thought imagine that the agency of Job's release is discoverable in the ministry of the three friends who participated with him in the discussion, but such is not the case. Doubtless they meant well. But what miserable blunderers they were! You cannot argue with a broken heart. Logic stands impotent before a spirit consumed. Whatever they said was

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wrong. They brought not comfort to Job, but moved him to rebellion. No wonder he cried:

> Hold your peace, let me alone...
> How long will ye vex my soul,
> And break me to pieces with words?

Perhaps the wisest thing Job's friends did was when at their first approach "they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word to him; for they saw that his grief was very great." Had they continued in that sympathy of silence, Job might have remembered their ministrations with greater gratitude. But they began ponderously to justify to him the ways of God and they brought added injury instead of comfort. Oh, these folk who know so much about the ways of God and the will of God! What poor comforters they are, and how they make us long for the clasped hand of one who does not intrude upon our sorrow his firstly, secondly and thirdly, but who sits with us in silence, seeing that our "grief is very great."

Neither did deliverance come to Job through the

medium of a philosophy developed in the processes of debate or emerging from the crucible of suffering. Three philosophies or philosophic moods seemed progressively to possess him without bringing release.

There was, first, the mood of revolt, the way of the rebel who hurls himself in petulant rage against the rocks of the inevitable. Its chief mark is its evident futility. When they told Thomas Carlyle of Margaret Fuller's theatrical pronouncement, "I accept the universe," the old Scot's dour comment was: "Gad! She'd better!"

Then came the mood of the stoic, the stern, yielding, but unseeing courage of him who cries with Henley:

> My head is bloody, but unbowed.
> I am the master of my fate;
> I am the captain of my soul.

Infinitely better than the way of the rebel is the way of the stoic. But in stoicism there is not the gift of freedom. Adopting it, the soul of Job was captive still.

A modification of stoicism is the philosophy of resignation, which not only endures, but trusts. This was Job's nearest approach to spiritual release in the body of the poem itself. When, in the drama, God steps out upon the stage and answers the sufferer from the whirlwind he makes no mention of Job's afflictions, brings no answer to his questionings, yet satisfies him with his presence; and Job is resigned. Humiliating himself before God he cries:

> But now mine eye seeth thee;
> Wherefore I abhor myself.

Now, the posture of the suppliant and the mien of the penitent have their place in the processes of regeneration, but they do not bring release. To all who cry out with Job, "My spirit is consumed," to all who in groveling moan, "I abhor myself," God says as to Ezekiel, "Stand upon thy feet, and I will speak with thee." Deliverance is not in mere trusting resignation.

GOD AND SPIRITUAL FREEDOM

Rather is the principle upon which Job's captivity was turned and his spirit renewed revealed in the simple account of the epilogue. The verbose and self-esteeming friends of the sufferer are rebuked for their presumption and commanded to offer up for themselves a burnt offering of seven bullocks and seven rams while Job, standing at their penitential altar, prays for them. Then, with such brevity that it is not difficut to pass them wholly by, or at best to miss their deeper meaning, come the most significant words of the entire book, revealing at once the secret of Job's own release and the ever recurring principle of spiritual emancipation: "The Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends."

Apparent and self-elucidating as this incisive statement is, it involves certain inferences which are worthy of consideration.

1. One such inference is that the source of spiritual freedom is in God. It was the Lord who turned the captivity of Job and it is ever so. Captivity's captor is he. "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice." The Lord, sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, brings the hope of a better world wherein dwelleth righteousness. The Lord, sovereign and enthroned in the universe of man's heart, brings the promise of the truth that sets men free.

One hopeful thing about Job was that he never quite got away from God. He saw the day when he wanted to die but he would not "curse God and die."

I know that the idea of the active participation of a sovereign God in all things of time and eternity is a doctrine subject to all manner of abuse. That there is danger of misinterpretation cannot be denied, but neither can it be denied that it is a danger from which our own age is singularly free. Nor are our times characterized by any need more apparent than that of an overpowering conviction of the reality of an active and spiritually omnipotent God to whom the soul gives its supreme allegiance and in whom are the sources of all life and liberty. It was the Lord who turned the captivity of Job, the Lord whom he himself had enthroned in the innermost sanctuary of his heart.

TRANSFORMED CAPTIVITY

2. A second inference is that the method of release is the transformation of the elements of captivity itself. Freedom and buoyancy of soul were not miraculously substituted for a consumed spirit, but that spirit was renewed and set free when Job, out of the elemental stuff of which his captivity was made, fashioned a philosophy of action. The Lord *turned* the captivity of Job. The problem of human woe had overwhelmed him, but it was in answering the call of human woe that he found freedom, and the scene of his ignominy became his platform of service.

Out of the tragedies of life often come grace and blessing. Chastened, limping Israel went farther than his predecessor, the scheming, sound-limbed Jacob. The good Uzziah's death brought grief to all the land, but in that year of national calamity a young man named Isaiah saw the Lord, and a new day of prophecy and hope was born for Israel. Frequently have missionary appropriations been withdrawn from needy fields with misgivings and predictions of calamity, only to be followed by a demonstration of sacrificial loyalty on the fields which made for unparalleled progress and achievement. So certain are some of the keenest students of economic and social life that the building of a better world order waits upon the conscious appropriation of the lessons of eras of depression and defeat that they deem premature and futile the return of a mere cyclic prosperity which is not conditioned upon an altered economic structure and a genuine social repentance. It is the undeniable experience of mankind that in the very elements of captivity and defeat may be found the stuff out of which come freedom and victory. The transformation of captivity is the method by which God sets men free. The Lord *turned* the captivity of Job.

FINDING FREEDOM THROUGH SERVICE

3. The most apparent inference from this keen comment of Job's experience is that the principle by which captivity is turned is the identification of self with the needs of others. Looking in sympathy upon the humiliation of his friends, Job's own soul found release. Staggering beneath a burden of grief too great to bear, he

took upon himself the grief of others and found his burden lighter. "The Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends."

Here is no isolated incident, but a law of life. Here is no arbitrary dictate of caprice, but the illustration of a principle upon which is built the integrity of a moral universe. Modern psychology says there are two extreme groups of men. There are the intraverts who, looking solely upon their own problems, see them as increasingly insoluble, and, viewing their own calamities, find them, as Job declared, "heavier than the sand of the seas." And there are the extraverts, who, beholding their own woes as a part of the woes of mankind, find light and freedom and healing in self-forgetful service. And yet, long centuries before this youthful science discovered the working of such laws, a discerning writer of an age without scientific pretensions observed that "the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends."

Even in the sphere of nationalistic attainment, where self-seeking has always been regarded as essential to well-being, the world is learning at last the truth and force of this principle which brings the larger freedom to those who have the imagination to identify themselves with the hopes, the needs, the interests of others. The old way of nationalism is the way of suspicions, jealousies and strife, and its end is captivity. The new way is the way of confidence, understanding and cooperation, and it leads to true liberty.

Further illustration of the force of this liberating principle of life is seen in the Christian church. Preaching, though she has, the doctrine of unselfish service, the church has not always been selfless. And whenever she has sought her own her heart has grown cold and her hand palsied. Though she has grown in wealth and social prestige until she could no longer say, "Silver and gold have I none," neither could she say, "Take up thy bed and walk." The triumphant hours of the church's life have come when she has identified herself with the needs of the world, turning from her captivity and entering into that larger freedom of passionate, self-sacrificing world service.

A CHALLENGE TO A CAPTIVE CHURCH

Such an hour came with the great foreign missionary movement of a century ago. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1825 was trying to decide which of two great projects to undertake, a greater educational program for the cities and villages of Scotland or the sending of Alexander Duff to India. It was then that Thomas Chalmers arose to plead that the undertaking of either objective would pave the way for the other and to lay down his great principle that "Charity does not work by exhaustion, but by fermentation."

For final confirmation of this principle of spiritual liberty we turn to the Master Teacher. To the weary and heavy laden of his day he came with a new and radiant way of life: "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

What is it that Jesus says? It is this:

"You are tired, weary, burdened, embittered? Ah! but you are tired because, though you toil with courage, you toil blindly.

"Come, take my yoke. It is lined with love. It is radiant with understanding.

"Rebel against the universe and it is adamant and cruel. Accept it with the unseeing courage of the stoic and it is heartless and a mystery still. But assume your place in its upward progress, fit yourself into its life and bear your part of its burden in helpful service and you will find that the yoke is easy and the burden light."

Jesus' call is to labor—at his side. He offers not relief, but to increase the burden. Yet his promise is for rest "unto your souls"—a calm and peace and rest of spirit in whose strength we may bear with eager joy the burden of our world. And, even so, centuries before his day it was revealed to a spiritually sensitive soul that "the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends."

"My Country"

PROTECT "my country"! But where is "my country"? Who has decreed that "my country" shall include only the geographical area bounded by the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans, Canada and Mexico? Who has decreed that "my country" shall embrace only those men, institutions and events which lie between the year 1492 and the present? Who may thus limit and define "my country"?

Where Isaiah lifted up his voice for human justice, there is my country. Where Plato announced the reality of the spiritual, there is my country. Where Jesus offered his life for men, there is my country. Where St. Francis lived the compassionate life, there is my country. Where Shakespeare swept the human scene into his dramas, there is my country. Where Luther struck for the liberty of the soul, there is my country. Where Darwin discovered the method of the Creator, there is my country. Where Magna Charta was signed, there is my country. Where Milton sang, where Rembrandt painted, where Goethe wrote—there is my country.

Who draws these little lines, limiting my allegiance by accidents of time and space?

Where Gandhi fights a swordless fight for freedom, there is my country. Where Schweitzer heals the bodies of black men, there is my country. Where Kagawa champions the underprivileged, there is my country. Where brave men stand firm against Hitler's barbarism, there is my country.

I would protect my country. For my country I would fight against all enemies. Where is my country and who are its enemies?

Wherever men and women lift the flag of justice, or of beauty, or of freedom, or of truth, or of peace, or of fellowship, there is my country. Who enslaves men in body for the sake of gain, or in mind for the sake of power, who tramples on others' rights, who closes the doors of opportunity, who serves the dark gods of superstition and prejudice, who turns his eyes toward the past, who denies to others the privileges he desires for himself—he is my enemy. God help me to protect my country against all enemies!

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God's Poems

By William Crowe, Jr.

Ye are God's workmanship. Ephesians 2:10.

"YOU are God's poems," Paul wrote to his friends in Ephesus. The Bible text renders the passage: "Ye are God's workmanship." The Greek word for "workmanship" is the one from which we get our word "poem." What a wealth of meaning unfolds to the imagination as we think of ourselves as God's poems! Sublime in the finest degree, Christians have the privilege of revealing the best that the divine artist can do. We can test the success of our spiritual life by comparing ourselves to the standards that make good poetry. God is the poet, Christians are his masterpieces.

What are some of the essentials of a good poem?

I

In the first place, a good poem must make its readers see clearly the thought it intends to reveal. To do this, its meter must be balanced, its thought must be connected, its expression must be in good taste. This is true, also, of the Christian life. It must make others see clearly the real purpose of living. The meter of a Christian life must be balanced. God's poems must not have one set of habits for Sunday and another for other days. Many people have their names on the church roll who go out from the worship of God to live on a basis that is foreign to Jesus' spirit. Thus, they break the cadence of the meter. Their lives may not be bad: perhaps only drab and shallow without any experience with a faith that is heroic.

Again, the thought of a poem must be consistent. How do you think a poem would sound that is disconnected in thought? One line is written about an expensive new car, the next about an airplane flight, the third about a business engagement, while the last is about the moonlight shining on your sweetheart's hair. If that were written to be an actual poem, you would suspect it had been composed by a crazy man. Insanity is only the inability of a person to relate thoughts to each other in orderly sequence. Each one of those lines might be all right for a poem if used and developed as a separate theme, but there is nothing that binds them together into a single stanza. Your verdict is that they would make no poem at all. Neither does such a life, yet many lives are being projected on that kind of plan. If we were to analyze them according to the standards of poetry, we would justly say that they are the lives of crazy men.

Life just happens for people like that. There is no unity or revealed purpose to their careers. You cannot expect to be a good student if you have no system for studying. You cannot expect to be a good businessman if you have no plan for your work. You cannot expect to have fine character if you give no attention to its development.

Then again, the words that are chosen to express the idea of a poem must be in good taste. The quality of the words that describe an idea makes all the difference in the world. For example, a man flatters a woman when he says that time stands still under the benign influence of her gaze, but he dare not tell her that he face would make a clock stop, though the two expressions have the same literal meaning.

If the words of a poem should be in good taste, the acts of a life should be. One of the greatest tragedies of our day is that so many of us are trying to be what we are not. That is not only bad taste: it is moral defeat. Some are trying to live beyond their income. Others are attempting to assume a degree of culture that they do not possess. Some are trying to appear religious when they are not, while others are posing as irreligious when they are really craving for some spiritual insight into the overwhelming problems of life. Insincerity will spoil any poem. As we look about us we see that sham and show are spoiling many of God's poems that would otherwise be of great use in the world.

By keeping the meter of life true, by following a consistent plan according to the guidance of God, and by expressing life in a sincere manner, we may fulfill a part of the function of a divine poem for then our lives will help others to see the real purpose of living.

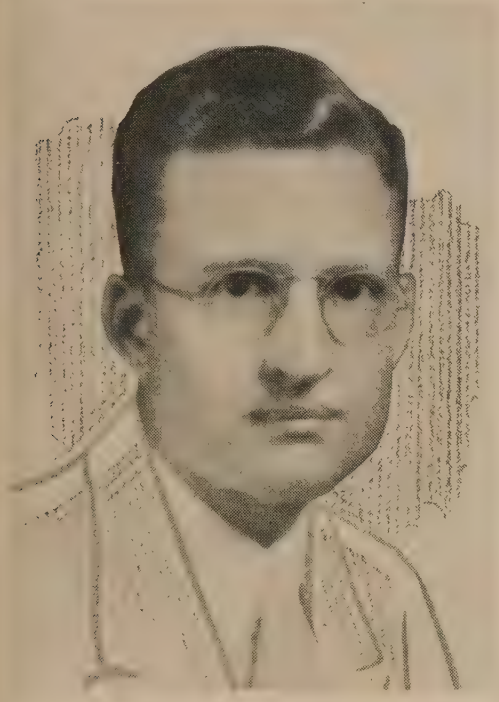
One of the most distinguished citizens of Columbia, South Carolina, was an old Negro man, known by everyone as "Uncle Jaggers." He was a preacher who ministered to Negro chain gangs, inmates of the county home, prisoners in the penitentiary, and to all who were in trouble. He conducted a home for aged Negroes on his own initiative and supported it by asking white people for nickels and dimes. It was all very primitive of course, but it was a remarkable expression of his courageous love. Everybody recognized the greatness of his soul. When he died the white people buried him with an impressiveness accorded only the south's distinguished sons. The mayor issued a proclamation closing all business houses during the funeral; the governor of the state, several former governors, college presidents, bank presidents, together with Negro laborers, paupers and ex-convicts gathered to pay their last tributes of respect. The life of Uncle Jaggers had been a consistent poem. He had enabled all who knew him to see clearly the dominant theme of his noble career.

II

This brings us to consider the next requirement for a good poem. That is, that a poem must make its readers feel deeply the thought that it represents. To do this it must have a purpose and move to a climax. In that movement it must strive to carry the reader along with it. No poem is complete unless it has that subtle quality. Other types of literature appeal to the mind; a poem is designed to reach the heart. Poetry gives to a theme an emotional quality that cannot be produced by any other literary form. For example, Burbank would study a flower by the scientific method, analyzing it and following its habits for generations of plant life. Then he would write a book about his observations. He would record, apparently, everything there was to be known about the flower. But Wordsworth, with a few flashes of an artist's pencil, could reveal the glory of a daffodil in a way that Burbank could not by his laboratory methods.

This is true, also, of life. You may read a description of the virtue of honesty which convinces you that hon

esty is a necessary trait of the good life, but there may be no moving quality about the discussion that will make you want to be honest. However, you are inspired by knowing a man in your community who is bravely fighting a battle of honor. Time after time you know he refuses to take advantage of his friends, though he could save his business in that way. Finally you see his fortunes swept away, his home and his personal possessions are sold to keep his friends from suffering with him. That kind of a character becomes one of the sacred traditions of the community. It is one of the glories of the city's life that such a man has lived in it. He was strong enough to rise above his temptations. He was



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courageous enough not to allow his tragedy to overwhelm him. In him we have seen honor exemplified, clothed with heroic living, and it is the desire of all who know him to follow him.

A person who is not striving to make others feel deeply the great facts of life is failing to use a divine talent which he possesses, a talent which is artistic and poetic. It is a sad day for a people when their art becomes divorced from the current of their life, when it comes to be looked upon as a luxury, having little to do with political ideals, educational policies or economic institutions. However, I fear that we are living in such a time. Fine arts have no great hold upon us. We have no depth of feeling for them. We have no great conviction of their importance.

You cannot expect a nation which disregards the artistic sense ever to feel deeply about many things; nor can you expect a nation which does not feel deeply to care much about righteousness and justice. Furthermore, you cannot hope for a man who does not care how hideous his surroundings are to care very greatly about his moral obligations. We hear much today about what will cure the ills of our confused world. One says that a share-the-wealth society will solve our problems. Another says that government control of prices will banish most modern ills. And there are many other theories. But nothing is needed so much today as men and women who can feel deeply the presence of the divine spirit in everyday living and who will live in such a way as to make others feel that presence, too.

We have had enough sermons, political speeches and bankers' addresses to make us see what is the matter with our world. Now we must have some artistic living. We need some human poems that exemplify righteousness and justice, for in that way the Word becomes flesh in us and the world beholds the glory of God and is attracted by a faith that is contagious. If you do not learn to cultivate fine emotions, you will never learn the art of living.

There is a German legend which we all read in childhood, of Hans, the shepherd boy, who was walking over the hills when he saw in the moss a beautiful blue flower. As he stooped to pick it there opened to him a stairway that led down into the earth. After descending the steps a gate opened before him and he found himself in a room filled with gems and gold of which he was to take all that he could carry. When he had filled his pockets and his hands he started back up the stairs but in his eagerness to enrich himself he forgot the blue flower and upon reaching the top of the stairs the door had disappeared and he discovered that the gold and gems had turned to leaves and pebbles. Hans had lost that which gave to all else its value, and so it may be with us. The human heart is capable of everything that is fine and courageous, but if we fail to cultivate the best of our endowments, we will take our places among those who never achieve the peace that comes with a real understanding of life.

During the nineteenth century a single poem by Thomas Hood did more to relieve the injustices to laborers in industry than anything else written during the period. The poem, called the "Song of the Shirt," had an emotional quality that inspired a crusading spirit in the hearts of people who were concerned about human welfare. The concluding stanza runs:

> O men, with sisters dear!
> O men, with mothers and wives!
> It is not linen you're wearing out
> But human creatures' lives!
> Stitch—stitch—stitch!
> In poverty, hunger and dirt—
> Sewing at once with a double thread,
> A shroud as well as a shirt!

It remained for a poem to make people feel the wrongs of that day deeply enough to start the process of revolutionizing human relationships within industry. Thus it is always with God's poems. Personality inspired by a great purpose is the most glorious force in the world. The actual living of great ideas is the only means of making others desire to have them for their own.

The divine plan for dealing with human life is based upon this same fact. For thousands of years Hebrew lawgivers, prophets, wise men and historians had been

trying to make the citizens of one small nation believe in God as a merciful Father and loving Companion. All these leaders could not persuade the masses of the people to believe that about God for more than short periods. The idea did not even spread to the nations that were the nearest neighbors of the Jews. But one night angels' songs announced the birth of a child who was to represent the Father and reveal a perfect love. Jesus lived and walked the ways of men. Through his life men came to know God as Father. Three fleeting years of his simple peasant life did more than thousands of years of teaching. Men saw him and were captivated, and throughout the world today men are attracted to Jesus because in him they see true life. Other teachers had plead the cause that Jesus came to reveal but somehow they could not say in their words what he could say in his life. That is true artistry! Though we may not achieve the splendor of Jesus' life, we can reveal a divine quality that will make men feel the importance of the great realities, for we are God's poems.

III

Then, in conclusion, there is another element of good poetry for us to consider. A good poem must make its readers appreciate beauty. This beauty is more than a surface quality. The mere combination of musical words is not sufficient to make lasting beauty. There has to be content, a thought that makes the poem worth while. And there must be woven into the texture of the poem an artistic character which helps the reader to see the beautiful. No poem can be great that is not like that. And these are essentials of all true living. There are two ways, among others, in which we as God's poems can help others see the beautiful, especially in unexpected places.

One of these ways is for us to develop an appreciation of commonplace things. Jesus' most striking parables were taken from everyday affairs: a grain of wheat and a blade of corn were *like* the kingdom of God! A farmer, a well of water, a little child, gave the divine Artist opportunities to teach beautiful truths. The birds of the air, the lilies of the field, became special objects of interest to the Master.

A man who was facing death from an incurable disease said that the greatest regret he had about the past was that he had not been happier and more appreciative of the lovely things and simple experiences that compose normal life. Since death had cast the shadow of its approach across his path he had had an awareness of every beautiful thing in nature and of the goodness in man which could have made life rich beyond all power to express—if it had not come too late.

Another unexpected way in which we can show the beauty of living is by our attitude in the time of trouble. All poems are not about beautiful themes, of course, but all great poems make us want to change ugliness into beauty, or they show us how to see beauty in the very hour of tragedy. Some of the most charming poems have been written in the valley of the shadow of gloom.

The greatest beauty of Jesus' life is to be seen at Calvary, though there his face was more marred than that of any of the sons of men. And when shadows envelop the lives of his followers, it is often true that the transcendent light of the divine spirit streams from their personalities as at no other time. When the swirling tide of tragedy had surged over her heart, Emily Taylor Perkins wrote:

> I would be kind. I can no longer pray
> For paltry things that used to seem so great
> Before my sorrow left me desolate
> And death swept glamor's blinding veil away.
>
> Like Thee, whose loving-kindness is my stay
> Along the dreary path I tread of late,
> I would be kind.
>
> Yet, not for kingdoms would I change today
> This broken heart. Lord, help me consecrate
> Its bitter sorrow to alleviate
> The grief of others, as one who knows, yea,
> I would be kind.

We, too, can be poems of divine creation. A great challenge to artistic living beckons us today. It is the supreme desire of God that our lives should be so molded after the pattern of the Master whom we serve that we may make others see clearly the real purpose of living, feel deeply the great facts of life, and appreciate the beauty of the presence of God in human experience.

War is a Racket

By Smedley D. Butler

WAR is a racket; possibly the oldest, easily the most profitable, surely the most vicious. It is the only one international in scope.

A racket is best described, I believe, as something that is not what it seems to the majority of the people. Only a small "inside" group knows what it is about. It is conducted for the benefit of the very few at the expense of the masses.

Out of war a few people make huge fortunes. Nations acquire additional territory (which is promptly exploited by the few for their own benefit) and the general public shoulders the bill—a bill that renders a horrible accounting of newly placed gravestones, mangled bodies, shattered minds, broken hearts and homes, economic unstability, and back-breaking taxation of the many for generations and generations.

For long years I have known that war is a racket but I never faced it until I saw the clouds gathering again as they are today. They are choosing sides now. Yes, they are getting ready for another war. War, like any other racket, pays high dividends to the very few. But what does it profit the masses?

The soldiers, of course, pay the biggest part of the bill. If you don't believe it, visit the American cemeteries on the battlefields abroad or visit any of the veterans' hospitals in the United States. On a tour of the country, in which I am engaged at the time of writing, I have seen eighteen government hospitals for veterans. In them are a total of about 50,000 destroyed men. Seventeen years ago they were the pick of the nation.

The chief surgeon at the government hospital at Milwaukee, where there are 3,800 of the living dead, told

me that mortality among veterans is three times as great as among those who stayed at home. Boys with a normal viewpoint were taken out of the fields and offices and factories and classrooms and put into the ranks. There they were remolded; they were made over; they were made to "about face," to regard murder as the order of the day. They were put shoulder to shoulder and, through mass psychology, they were made into machines for slaughter. We trained them to kill other men with nonchalance and dispatch. We used them a couple of years.

Then, suddenly, we discharged them and told them to make another "about face." Only this time they had to do their own readjusting, without mass-psychology, without officers' aid and advice, without nation-wide propaganda. We turned them loose without three-minute speeches, without parades. Many, too many, of these fine young boys were eventually destroyed mentally, because they could not make that final "about face" alone.

Napoleon once said, "All men are enamored of decorations . . . they positively hunger for them." So, by developing the Napoleonic system—the medal business—the government learned it could get soldiers for less money, because boys like to be decorated. Until the Civil War, there were no medals. Then the Congressional Medal of Honor was instituted. It made enlistments easier.

In the World War, we used propaganda to make the boys accept conscription. They were made ashamed of not joining the army. It was then decided to make the soldier help pay for the war, too. So we gave him a large salary—$30 a month. All he had to do for that munificent sum was to give up his job, leave everything he knew and loved behind, brave death and injury, lie in swampy trenches, eat canned willy (when he could get it), and kill and kill and kill . . . and be killed.

But wait.

Half of that wage (just a little more in a month than a riveter in a shipyard or a laborer in a munition factory made in a day) was promptly taken from him to support his dependents, so that they would not become a charge upon the nation. Then we made him pay what amounted to accident insurance—something the employer pays for in an enlightened state—and that cost him $6.60 a month. He had less than $9 a month left. Then—the most crowning insolence of all—he was virtually blackjacked into paying for his own ammunition, clothing, and food by making him buy Liberty bonds. Most soldiers got no money at all on paydays. But they bought Liberty bonds at $100, and then we bought them back, when they had returned from the war and couldn't find work, at $84. And the soldiers bought tabout two billion dollars' worth of them.

Until we arrive at a stage where public office-holders, those who govern us, have more consideration for the safety and welfare and happiness of the people as a whole than for the success of any political party or small group, we will have wars and other rackets of all kinds.

But there is a way to stop this racket. It cannot be smashed by disarmament conferences, by peace parleys at Geneva, by resolutions of well-meaning but impractical groups. It can be effectively smashed only by taking the profit out of war. The only way to stop it is by conscription of capital before conscription of the nation's manhood. One month before the government may order the young men of the nation to be killed, it must serve notice of conscription on the country's capital.

Let the officers and directors of our armament factories, our gun builders and munition makers and shipbuilders all be conscripted—to get $30 a month, the same wage paid to the lads in the trenches.

Let the workers in these plants get the same wage. All workers, all executives, all presidents, all directors, all managers—everyone in the nation be restricted to a total monthly income not to exceed that paid to the soldier in the trenches.

Let all these kings and tycoons and masters of industry and all these workers in industry pay insurance and buy government bonds.

Why shouldn't they? They aren't running the risk of being killed or having their bodies mangled or their minds shattered. The soldiers run that risk.

Give capital thirty days to think it over and you will learn by that time that there will be no war. That will stop the racket—that and nothing else.

From *War and Peace: An Anthology.*

A Pastoral Prayer

By Robert Merrill Bartlett

ETERNAL Spirit, we turn from the noise and hurrying of life to the peace that can be found only in Thy presence. Forgive us for falling under the domination of material things, for becoming dull and selfish. Forgive us for the restlessness that afflicts us, for lack of self-possession and serenity of spirit. Enter into our minds, we pray Thee; free us from serfdom to things and from confusion of ideals.

O Thou who dost transform the hearts of those who seek Thee, teach us to cultivate the quiet mind, which knows how to turn to Thee in time of turmoil and be at peace.

Save us from defeat before the enemies of routine and fatigue. Save us from irritation over trivialities and restless striving after material goals. Center our thoughts upon the ordering of our minds, upon strength of character, friendship and love, service to others, the fruits of culture, and the possession of enduring satisfactions.

Support us in our resolution to take time to live, and inspire us to make real our professed friendship for Thee. In the realm of silence and the world of action may we learn to possess Thy wisdom and Thy peace. We wait now before Thee with minds eager to receive Thee. Still our passions, conquer our weaknesses. Come, gracious Spirit. Amen.

Why 'Morning Worship at 11'?

By John R. Scotford

PROTESTANTISM is frequently distinguished by a passion for the prosaic. All too often we have disdained the colorful and pursued the drab. This is particularly true of the hour when we assemble for public worship. The poets are wiser than the preachers. Religious devotion expresses itself most naturally at the beginning or close of the day—"when morning gilds the sky" or when "day is dying in the west." Yet our churches hold their chief service at an hour which is as far removed from both sunrise and sunset as possible—eleven o'clock.

This is one of the most stupid hours of the day. Our minds have lost the keen edge of early morning. Whatever intelligence we may have had upon awakening is likely to have been dissipated by the banalities of the Sunday paper. The men are apt to be looking for the pangs of hunger, while the women are worried about the success of the sumptuous meal which they are about to serve. The commonplace rules our thoughts. It is an hour when the world is altogether too much with us.

● *Who Started Worship at 11?*

Some candidate for the degree of doctor of philosophy should be given the job of discovering how the eleven o'clock hour ever became established as the time of prayer for Protestantism. Such reasons as can be advanced for this custom seem rather inconsequential.

A friend suggests that when the Puritanical sabbath prevailed our fathers were hard put for harmless ways in which to fill up the day. For Sunday morning they solved the problem by sleeping late, going to church at eleven and then letting the Sunday School drag on into the more tempting hours of the afternoon. Possibly the idea was to so space the religious observances of the day as to make it quite difficult for people to get into mischief!

There are a few situations in which it is advantageous to have the hour of worship in close juxtaposition to dinner time. In many Indian churches it is the custom for everybody to bring their dinner with them, while "dinner on the grounds" is a frequent feature of church life in the rural south. But one also suspects that in some communities the attendance of a woman at church is a gentle way of signifying to her friends that somebody else is cooking her dinner for her.

Like many another feature of contemporary life, the eleven o'clock church service might be blamed upon the farmer. This hour is obviously midway between his morning and evening chores. In horse and buggy days it probably was as early as many rural people could get around to divine worship. Yet at present the farmer is more willing to move forward the time of church than is the city man.

The most reasonable justification for mid-day worship is the workingman's need for rest. Because of the long hours of labor and the physically exhausting nature of much work one can hardly blame the toiler who dedicated Sunday morning to slumber. Yet

John R. Scotford

this argument is rapidly losing its validity. The working day grows steadily shorter, while work itself is increasingly dissociated from muscular exertion. The number of people who need Sunday morning for recuperation from the labor of the week constantly diminishes.

● *Long Saturday Nights Partly Responsible*

Protestantism undoubtedly suffers from the childish impulse of many people to stay up all night during the week-end. From the middle west there comes the plaint that the farmers will not buy their week's supply of groceries until after the close of the last show on Saturday night—with the result that the stores must keep open until midnight. The answer to this should be a little organization on the part of the merchants with an eye to establishing reasonable hours of business for themselves and their employees. Then there are those incurable juveniles among us who want to play bridge or dance or listen to the radio or just talk until the early hours of Sunday morning. Unfortunately some church school teachers are to be found in this group, but for the most part these people are not very anxious about appearing in the house of the Lord on Sunday morning. In fact one suspects that some of them dissipate on Saturday night so as to have a good excuse for missing church on Sunday morning.

● *Changed Conditions to Be Considered*

Of course the best argument for the practicability of earlier church services is the success of the Roman church in getting the faithful out for mass. The original reason for Catholicism's sunrise habits lies in the law of the church that the priest must celebrate mass on an empty stomach. Being men of good appetite, most holy fathers like to get around to breakfast as soon as possible. Yet the fact remains that Catholics welcome the opportunity to get their religious duties out of the way early in the day—in spite of the fact that as a group they are more likely to be exhausted by physical toil than are Protestant church people. While there is no reason to believe that their Saturday night social engagements are any less numerous, even Catholic farmers find little difficulty in getting to town for mass at eight, nine or ten o'clock.

The plain truth is that the eleven o'clock church service does not fit the pattern of modern life. For good or ill the old style sabbath with its stuffy front parlor atmosphere punctuated with numerous church services is gone for good. So is the family sabbath on which the household sat around and quarreled with one another. A dangerous idleness has given way to a more or less wholesome activity. The present task of the church is not to monopolize the day but to offer our people effective inspiration for living.

If we were making a fresh study of the situation without reference to the traditions of the past we would never pick that time of day.

● *Some Interesting Experiments*

Here and there a church is experimenting with earlier hours. A Brooklyn church has both an eight and an eleven o'clock service throughout the year. Among the Welsh miners of Pennsylvania ten o'clock is a popular

hour. Bilingual churches find that ten o'clock or before is a good time for an English service, with preaching for the old folks in their native tongue at the conventional hour. Where rural churches are yoked together it has been discovered that nine-thirty is a better time than eleven—after the people once become accustomed to it. In Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, a church which has had a nine-forty-five service during the summer for the convenience of the golfers is now continuing throughout the year at that hour. And these are merely the instances which have come to the attention of one person.

In addition to the obvious advantages of giving people a chance to do something besides go to church on Sunday and separating the hours of worship from dinner time a number of other gains are registered. Some escape is had from the starchiness usually associated with Protestant worship. An early hour is more inviting to those who are not confirmed churchgoers. They are more willing to sample a sermon if they are not under the necessity of waiting around all morning for that privilege. Much of the popularity of adult Bible classes has been their more convenient time of meeting. There is no reason why this should not be claimed for the church.

Moving the church service forward permits a rethinking of the question whether the church school should precede or follow morning worship. Outside of New England the church school usually comes first, with the result that often the church service may be something of an anticlimax. An earlier hour of worship would make possible holding the school after church without entangling it in the dinner hour. This would have a number of advantages—such as accommodating the teacher who stays out late the night before—and is deserving of consideration.

The Ministry of the Mimeograph

By Donald E. Redmond

SOME months ago there appeared an article in the *Christian Century Pulpit* which bore the title "The Ministry of the Pen." Ever since reading that article, the idea has fascinated me. Not only were many possibilities splendidly suggested there; but my own experience since then has opened up others. Nevertheless, I have thus far been unable to find the time to make a very wide use of that ministry. Perhaps that is a confession that my time is not properly budgeted. At any rate the business of doing other things has prevented my using the pen even when the situation and the opportunity presented itself.

But I find that during the past few months I have, somewhat unconsciously, been turning to another medium for doing something of the same thing. Lacking the time to use the pen properly, at various times we have turned to the mimeograph, with results that have been satisfactory and that have led on to new possibilities. It is not so personal as the pen, to be sure, but it is far more personal than nothing at all; and our limited experience with this new possibility has been very gratifying.

● *Opportunities of the Easter Season*

It began at the Easter season when a fine class of boys and girls were received into the church and we decided that we would borrow the idea of having "big brothers" and "big sisters" in the church. When ten or fifteen children had chosen their "big brothers" we were faced with the task of properly notifying the persons selected. Someone may properly remind me that we should have made a call on each of those persons. But there is no point in being unreal about the facts. The press of other duties made a call impossible. So we turned to the mimeograph. Immediately there opened up the possibility of saying more than "you have been chosen." We indicated a few ways of showing an interest in that little brother or that little sister, ways of helping them to grow in the Christian life. We indicated their need to keep a check on the church attendance, the Sunday School interest, the general outlook of the one who had asked for their guidance in the church.

Surely there is nothing new about such a procedure. Every pastor has many times turned to some means of rapid duplication for saying something to the members of his church. The newness, if there be any at all, came at this point: we remembered that Easter will come again, that other boys and girls will be selecting their "big brother" and their "big sister" and we shall also want to notify those selected. So as we mimeographed the sheet, we made more than enough copies for our immediate use. The rest we put carefully away as the first set of such materials in what is growing to be a regular library of mimeographed helps in personal ministry.

● *Graduations and Marriages*

Not many months after Easter, came June and graduation time. Presents were out of the question for the many young people of our own church who were finishing their high school work. Even to purchase graduation cards for each of them runs into more money than small budgets will allow. Again the mimeograph came to our rescue. In the form of a letter we included a statement, a challenging poem, and a prayer. It so happens that the pastor's wife is an artist and she decorated the page with appropriate designs. Thus, at a fraction of the cost, it was possible to send such a sheet to every member of the graduation class. Not as a personal note in our own hand, to be sure; but at least an indication of our interest in them and of our awareness that something significant had happened to them. And again, while in the process of making such a sheet, we ran off enough copies to lay a supply away as the second item in this developing ministerial tool.

More recently still, a sudden epidemic of marriages has swept over our community. In a small community such as the one in which we live, whatever the practice elsewhere, it is the usual procedure for the young couple to dash off to the city to be married. Their pastor may hear about it through the papers, or by word of mouth, after it has occurred. He has had no specific opportunity to speak a word of encouragement or of challenge; yet he still feels an interest in the success of the momentous undertaking which they have begun.

This time we turned to the mimeograph deliberately because we had learned that it could supply us with a usable tool in our pastoral work. In our message we told the young people of the challenge and the opportunity of their new undertaking, and humbly offered to them our helping hand whenever the going should become rough.

● *Ever Increasing Possibilities*

So our library of materials has received another set of sheets. As soon as we hear of, or read of, a wedding in the community, out comes one of our helps and it goes into the mail.

But now the possibilities for using this tool have begun to swarm about us. Busily we are seeking for the appropriate words and thoughts that will enable us to add to that growing library of mimeographed helps.

It will not be long before a year will have elapsed since some of our boys and girls joined the church. Have they been making the progress in Christian living that they should? Will they not also appreciate the little touch of our remembering that occasion of a year ago? Will they not gladly accept any little suggestion as to how they might continue their fellowship in the church more joyously and with more impetus to growth? We are deciding that they will; so before long the typewriter will begin to pick out another stencil, and the mails will have the honor of making a few brief calls for us.

Naturally, the pen can never be replaced for specific personal notes, nor can the mimeograph take the place of calls that should be made; but for every occasion where a group of persons might be involved, or for every occasion which is likely to become a part of people's experience year after year, the opportunity beckons.

• WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

BORN in Glasgow, Scotland, Rev. ANDREW GILLIES was early brought to America. Following his graduation at Wesleyan University, in Connecticut, he was ordained in the Methodist ministry. His early pastorates were in Vermont and New York. He went from St. Andrew's Church in New York City to Hennepin Avenue Methodist Church, Minneapolis, where he had a long period of service. In 1925 he became pastor of Third Presbyterian Church, Rochester, N. Y. This year he is retiring from the active ministry.

Rabbi FERDINAND M. ISSERMAN *was* born in Belgium and came to America in 1906. He received his education at the University of Cincinnati and the Hebrew Union College, and later attended the University of Toronto and the University of Chicago. Following a four year ministry in Toronto, in 1929 he became rabbi of Temple Israel, St. Louis, Mo., where he still serves. He is a member of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, a trustee of Hebrew Union College and is one of the founders of the Social Justice Commission of St. Louis. The sermon published in this issue was preached at the Chicago Sunday Evening Club.

For three years, 1915-18, Rev. BRUCE S. WRIGHT was minister of the American Church in Manila, P.I. Shortly after, following a brief pastorate in Albany, N. Y., he went to Asbury-Delaware Methodist Church, Buffalo. In 1934 he accepted a call to the Old Stone Church in Meadville, Pa. His present post is at First Methodist Church, Erie, Pa.

Having graduated with high honors from Clark College and Hartford Seminary, Rev. W. C. BESSELIEVRE has ministered at New Rockford, N. D. Hutchinson, Minn., Minneapolis, Minn., De Smet, S. D. and recently came to the leadership of First Congregational Church, Pierre, S. D.

Rev. GEORGE W. BUCKNER, JR., *i* editor of *World Call*, international magazine published by missionary, educational and benevolent boards reporting to the International Convention of Disciples of Christ. His last pastorate was at Grand Rapids, Mich. He i one of six delegates representing his communion at th Oxford and Edinburgh conferences. Mr. Buckner wa educated at Culver-Stockton and Central Wesleyan col leges, and spent two years in study in England and Ger many. He holds A. M. degrees both in sociology and phil osophy.

Rev. WILLIAM CROWE, JR., *has bee* pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Talladega, Ala. since 1929, following a brief ministry in Tuscumbia. H received his B. D. at Union Seminary in Virginia. Mr Crowe has been chairman of the social relations commit tee of the Alabama Synod of the Southern Presbyterian Church. His sermon in this issue was used as a commencement address before the Talladega High School

Rev. ROBERT MERRILL BARTLETT *i* minister of the First Church of Christ, Longmeadow Mass.

Rev. JOHN R. SCOTFORD *is associat* secretary of the Home Mission Boards of the Congregational and Christian Churches.

Rev. DONALD E. REDMOND *is a ministe* of Miles, Tex.

TITLES AND TEXTS — What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

ERNEST F. ROESTI, Linwood Evangelical, Evansville, Ind. "Selective Sinning." Matt. 23:24—"Ye blind guides, that strain out the gnat, and swallow the camel."

D. TOWNES WINDHAM, First Methodist, Jefferson, Tex. "A Lost Art of the Church." I Chron. 16:3b—"And all the people said, Amen."

FREDERICK H. DAWSON, First Presbyterian, Belleville, Ill. "Wasted Favors." II Cor. 6:1—"I appeal to you, too, not to accept the favor of God and then waste it." (Goodspeed)

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

.....
Title of sermon

.....
Text used (write out the text)

.....
Name of minister

.....
Name of church

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Address

WILBUR L. CASWELL, St. Paul's Episcopal, Yonkers, N. Y "Past, Present and Future." (Parish anniversary sermon). Psa. 44:1—"We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old." Psa. 118:24—"This is the day which the Lord hath made." Josh. 13:1—"There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed."

J. D. JONES, Congregational, England. "Otherness." Phil 2:4—"Not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others."

JAMES D. KITCHIN, JR., Christian, Bluefield, Va. "Magnificent Obsession." John 17:19—"And for their sakes I sanctify myself."

J. LYALL, United, Kisbey, Sask. "A Sordid Immortality." Deut. 3:11—Of the king of Bashan: "the size of his bed was 18 feet long and 6 feet broad." (Moffatt)

ROBERT M. PUTT, North Congregational, Cleveland, O. "Prisms." Matt. 5:14—"Ye are the light of the world."

JOHN S. LAMB, St. Charles Presbyterian, New Orleans, La. "Twentieth Anniversary Sermon." Prov. 29:18—"Where there is no vision the people perish." II Pet 1:9—"Give diligence to make your calling and election sure."

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

AFTER seventeen years of almost continuous strife, the British government proposes that Palestine be divided into three parts, with an independent Jewish state occupying the fertile north and a strip along the coast, the Arab kingdom of Transjordania enlarged to take in the arid but larger south, and a permanent British mandate set up over a corridor running from the port of Jaffa to Jerusalem. It is also suggested that Britain retain control over Nazareth and the Sea of Galilee. The report of the royal commission which inquired into the disorders of last year admits that the root of Britain's troubles in Palestine has been the irreconcilable nature of the promises made to Jews and Arabs during the war years. It is to be inferred, therefore, that no further attempt will be made to persuade either of the rival groups in the Holy Land that the promises previously made to them are to be carried into full effect. But it seems exceedingly unlikely that this partition proposal will be received as an acceptable alternative by either Arabs or Jews. As a matter of fact, there is every reason to expect that the attempt to establish and then to maintain these "independent" states—both of them will be British dependencies in fact if not in form—will cost Britain more sleepless nights and more military expenditures than anything in the past.

Palestine's Partition Proposed

The Book of the Month

THE CHURCH AND ITS FUNCTION IN SOCIETY. *By W. A. Visser 't Hooft and J. H. Oldham. (An Oxford Conference book.) Willett, Clark & Company, $2.00.*

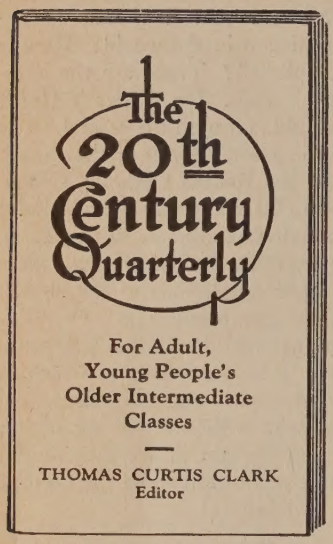
THIS book is the fundamental volume upon which the Oxford Conference will base its major discussion. I have just completed reading it on shipboard, en route to Oxford, and will post this review immediately on landing in England. Its authorship presents a happy combination. Dr. Oldham, a veteran writer and leader of missionary thought and theology, the inspiring and constructive mind behind the entire Oxford enterprise, joins with Dr. Visser 't Hooft, a young theologian and the leader of the Student Christian Movement throughout the world, in producing an analysis of the present situation in which the Christian church confronts its social task. It is by all odds the most comprehensive illumination of both the abiding and contemporary problems of the church which I have read. I wish there were some way to get fifty thousand Christian leaders, both clerical and lay, to read it. Such a distribution would spread the Oxford Conference over the whole American church. We may as well get it clear now, that our entire Christian outlook is going to be changed by the thinking that will come to focus at Oxford. This book, I believe, defines the issues which the church confronts and sets our feet in the path that is sure to widen into a broad new field of understanding, unity and power. What is the church, and what is its mission in the world? How is this mission to be accomplished? These are the questions with which the book deals. Dr. Visser 't Hooft deals with the first, Dr. Oldham with the second. The reader is introduced to the great theories of the church which have been held by the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, Lutheran, Calvinistic, Methodist and the various Congregational communions. This survey gives one the exciting experience of discovering how much can be said for other conceptions of the church than that in which one has been brought up! Dr. Oldham's analysis of the present world situation is as powerful as it is penetrating. I have no space in which to make quotations or even summary generalizations. All I can say is that anyone who wishes not to lag behind the movement of Christian thought in our time should read this book. It offers a way of attending the Oxford Conference at a cost of two dollars!

A Thought for the Month

CHRISTIANITY seems to move by a kind of rhythm. It has its ups and downs in the world, its periods of calm and storm, its restful, comfortable, hopeful seasons, and then its crises when there is confusion and anxiety and fear. Our Lord intended to prepare us for this rhythmic movement when he likened his kingdom in one place to leaven which works silently in the meal, and at another place to the thief who comes suddenly in the night. He warns us against complacency when all seems to be going well and the kingdom is apparently making steady progress. "Beware," he says, "when all men speak well of you." When the world speaks well of the church and seems to fall in approvingly with the church's ideas and purposes, that is a time to look within and to look deep down into the foundations. Perhaps the church has given hostages to the world, perhaps it has made a too comfortable adjustment to secular society, perhaps the world's favor is not due to improvement on the world's part but to the relaxing of the church's witness. Our Lord intended to prepare us for such crises when he told Simon Peter that Satan would sift him as wheat. A crisis is a sifting time. Christendom is in such a crisis today. What disillusionment the world situation is bringing to the church with respect to the comfortable adjustments it has enjoyed for many generations! God is shocking his church into consciousness; he is sifting his people. The gospel had grown commonplace in our hearts. But now we begin to see how precious it is, and how the whole destiny of civilization hangs upon our faithful witness to realities which we had come to take almost for granted. We seem to have been walking in a kind of dream while the world has been steadily drifting away from the only truth by which mankind can be saved.

The World and The Church

Charles Clayton Morrison



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THOMAS CURTIS CLARK
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ROY L. SMITH. Minister of the First Methodist Church of Los Angeles, and widely famed for his syndicated "Sentence Sermons." His department, "Pointers."

STANLEY I. STUBER. Journalist-minded preacher, contributor to many magazines. Pastor of the First Baptist Church, Clifton Springs, N. Y. Mr. Stuber conducts "The Lesson Forum."

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